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For Immediate Release

Kentucky Court of Justice awarded \$116,000 for DUI traffic safety programs

FRANKFORT, Ky., Jan. 20, 2006 — The Kentucky Governor's Highway Safety Program has awarded the Kentucky Court of Justice a \$116,000 grant to expand the state's DUI traffic safety programs. The funding will be used to provide Kentucky's district judges with the latest legal and scientific knowledge they need to better manage the impaired driving cases that come before their courts.

The grant is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) whose recommendations have become the foundation for Kentucky's DUI Gold Standards Program. Judges, prosecutors and other law enforcement professionals developed the Gold Standards Program as a means to improve highway safety and reduce impaired driving. The Governor's Highway Safety Program, which coordinates the state's highway safety programs, is responsible for administering and monitoring programs funded by NHTSA.

In April 2005, the Court of Justice used funds previously received from NHTSA to host a conference for district judges on traffic law enforcement. The additional funding will allow the court system to build on those initial efforts.

"This new grant will make it possible to expand the training that district judges received in 2005," said Chief Regional District Judge Karen Thomas of Campbell County who is also vice president of the Kentucky District Judges Association. "Our first conference focused on judicial involvement in community traffic safety and ethical issues arising from impaired driving cases, search and seizure in enforcement cases, and sentencing issues."

Lt. Eric Walker, commander of the Kentucky State Police Governor's Highway Safety Program, said, "We commend the Administrative Office of the Courts for its commitment to the DUI Gold Standards Program. We recognize the impact the AOC can have in educating district judges on DUI issues. The success of this project depends on the collaborative efforts made by each of the four areas involved – law enforcement, prosecution, adjudication and treatment."

The Administrative Office of the Courts is the administrative arm of the Kentucky Court of Justice and supports the activities of more than 3,400 court system employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks. The AOC also executes the Judicial Branch budget.

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